

Contributions and Significance of Research:

The authors have undertaken an interesting and significant study. Scholarships have been utilized for many years in ag related youth development - particularly in the livestock area. The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo (HLS&R) educational scholarship program is nationally recognized and is one of the largest. Educators who work in these areas are interested in knowing what type of impact scholarships bring about. The authors provide a very good introduction, literature review, and theoretical framework centering on Quality of Life (QOL).

The purposes of the study were to determine significant relationships among selected independent variables and QOL; to describe the overall QOL of individuals; and to determine if significant differences existed in QOL between graduates employed in their area of study versus those not employed in their area of study.

Procedural Considerations:

A correlation design was utilized. A two-part instrument was used that measured personal, education, employment and scholarship data along with a generic quality of life (QOL) profile. The QOL profile was determined from an instrument that was previously tested and utilized. Cronbach's alpha reliability for the instrument was acceptable from the initial developers. The reliability among this group was very high among most domains, sub domains and the overall scale.

Questions for Consideration:

The results of this study document that scholarship winners have a very positive QOL. It was mentioned that this is different from a national probability sample. How do these two samples compare? What makes this sample higher on QOL? There was a very low level of problematic QOLs reported among this population. What do the researchers attribute this to?

The second purpose of the study was to describe the overall QOL of individuals. This is an area of the conclusions that can be strengthened and expanded upon.

A very high (95%) persistence rate of completing undergraduate study was documented, and this was compared to a 52% national level. How do these two groups compare on this variable? How many of these youth would have gone on through their undergraduate program anyway? What difference did the scholarship program cause in this regard? The authors bring out a very important point in that this study consisted of all HLS&R scholarship winners. Further research is recommended that compares this group with non-scholarship winners to assess the real impact of this educational scholarship program.